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THE PEACEFUL EFFECT OF CONFIDENCE IN GOD.

ISAIAH, XXVI. 3. *Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee ; because he trusteth in thee.*

The ancient prophets were employed to bear the messages of God to his people. These messages were adapted to their peculiar circumstances. Sometimes they were designed to reprove them for their offences ; sometimes to admonish them of approaching danger ; and sometimes, to administer comfort and confidence under the dark and threatening aspects of divine providence. In the chapter which contains the text, the prophet administers matter of joy and faith, in a day of darkness and distress. The conclusion of the chapter discloses the occasion of the consolation in the beginning of it. These are the two last verses : " Come, my people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee ;

hide thyself, as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast. For behold, the Lord cometh out of his place, to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity ; the earth also shall disclose her blood and shall no more cover her slain." In such a time the prophet says, " This song shall be sung in the land of Judah ; We have a strong city ; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks. Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation, which keepeth the truth, may enter in. Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee ; because he trusteth in thee." Here trusting in God and staying the mind upon him mean the same thing, and produce the same happy effect, which is perfect peace. The words of our text, then, place before us the following sentiment : *Entire confidence in God affords perfect peace.* To illustrate this sentiment it is proposed,

I. To show what entire confidence in God implies ; and,

II. To show that such confidence will produce perfect peace.

I. It is proposed to show, what entire confidence in God, implies. There is not any genuine confidence in God, which is not entire. But there may be a partial confidence in God, while there is no sincere trust in him. Those, who have no true love to the great governor of the world, may have some dependance upon him, in concurrence with secondary causes. They may expect, from a certain concurrence of circumstances, that he will preserve or deliver them from evil, or bestow upon them some desired favor. But genuine confidence in God is always entire and perfect, and not divided between the creature and creator. Such confidence in God implies,

1. A realizing belief of his existence. This is different from a speculative belief. There are multitudes, who believe in speculation, that there is an eternal, immutable, self-existent Being, who possesses absolute perfection; and yet they have no realizing sense of being in his hand and under his eye. Those, who stay themselves upon God, see him, who is invisible and realize his existence and presence as much as their own. They realize the intimate connection between themselves and their creator, in whom they live and move and have their being. They are sensible of their nearness to God and of his nearness to them. It is only when the mind thus realizes the existence of God, that it can stay itself upon him or confide in him. Men may

have many affections that are right, without having true confidence in God. They may feel right towards the objects which they see, while they have no affections towards the king eternal immortal, and invisible, whom they do not see. But when the heart is right and the mind filled with a sense of the divine presence, then real confidence in God will always exist. Confidence in God, like all other affections towards him, always implies a realizing sense of his actual existence and universal presence. It is not in the power of any person to realize the existence of the deity and yet conceive him to be at a distance. Nearness to God and confidence in him cannot be separated. It is true, that there may be a sense of nearness without confidence; but there cannot be real confidence without a sense of nearness. The mind as well as the body, requires a reality to rest upon. Job could not confide in God, while he could not realize his presence. He says he looked on his right hand and on his left, but could not find him. He attended to his operations and the place where he did work, but could not behold him. This prevented his confidence and increased his distress. But when his eye saw him, he could abase himself before him; and he could love and exalt God and trust in him. The soul must have a present, direct view of God, draw near to him, come into his presence and realise the existence of an infinitely great,

and perfect Being, in order to rest upon him and confide in him.

2. Entire confidence in God implies a belief of his universal and perfect government. The belief that God exists and is omnipresent is not a sufficient foundation for confidence. Were it possible for God to exist without governing his creatures and his works, he would be a proper object of reverence, esteem and love. But he could not then be an object of confidence. A firm and realizing belief, that God holds the reins of government in his hand, is essential to entire confidence in him. And it is certainly the dictate of reason and scripture, that God is the great Governor of the universe. It is impossible to conceive, that he should delegate the power of government to any of his creatures. There is no hand, but that which made the universe, sufficiently powerful to govern it.— All created beings are equally, constantly and absolutely dependent. An angel is no more able to govern the universe than a man; and a man is no more able to do it, than a worm. The whole chain of created beings and created objects hangs suspended upon the omnipotent hand of God. He is, by nature and necessity the supreme ruler and disposer of all things in the whole circle of creation. And his government must be universal. It must extend to the smallest as well as the greatest objects. It must extend to the moral as well as the natural world. He must

govern the views and feelings, designs and actions of all moral beings. Accordingly the scripture represents God as governing the seasons, the winds and the waves, the creatures in the ocean, in the air and in the earth, and all the inhabitants of the world. The universality of the divine government is one of the plainest doctrines in the word of God. And so is the perfect rectitude of it. God is holy in all his ways and righteous in all his works. He has one uniform, consistent, important and benevolent object; and that is the highest holiness and happiness of the universe. He never withdraws his attention from this object for a single moment; nor does he in a single instance neglect to promote it. In all he does in heaven, in all he does on earth, and in all he does in the dark regions of hell, he aims to diffuse holiness and happiness among all his dutiful subjects in every part of his vast dominions. His wisdom enables him to know what is best; his goodness inclines him to choose it; and his power enables him to promote it. He employs all his creatures, and all his works to execute a scheme of goodness and of grace, which, when accomplished, will fill the minds of all holy creatures with gratitude and joy. His government has no imperfection attending it. It is neither unwise nor unkind, nor weak, but absolutely perfect. It is suited to the condition, the character, and circumstances of every created being.

Now, a realizing sense of this extent and perfection of the divine government is implied in an entire confidence in God. If it were possible to discover, or even to conceive, that God should be either unwise, or unjust, or unholy, or negligent in the administration of government, there would be no reasonable foundation for entire confidence in him. But if his government is universal in extent and perfect in rectitude, then there is a sufficient foundation for unbounded confidence in all his dispensations. There can be no reason to distrust infinite wisdom, power and rectitude. While these divine perfections are employed in the government of the universe, all its interests are perfectly secure. There is not the possibility, that either the whole, or any part of the intelligent creation should be injured; or be less happy than the infinite perfections of God should make it. And a belief of this truth is necessarily implied in entire confidence. But men may have a realizing belief of the existence of God and the perfection of his government, without the least confidence in him. And therefore I must add,

3. That entire confidence in God further implies a cordial approbation of the divine government. None can confide in God, who do not choose that he should govern the universe in the best possible manner, whatever may become of their interests for time and eternity. Mankind are gener-

ally more afraid that God will govern well, than that he will govern ill. They are more afraid that he will do right than that he will do wrong. And when they are afraid of his doing right or of his doing wrong, they can have no confidence in him. Nothing but a truly benevolent spirit, which desires the highest good of the universe, can approve of the divine government, which will infallibly promote this most desirable and most important object. But when persons feel a benevolent spirit, and heartily desire the great object of the divine government, they must feel entire confidence in God. A realizing belief that he is able and willing to do what is best, must produce unlimited confidence in all the dispensations of his providence. This belief, in connection with this approbation, must banish all distrust from the mind. It is utterly inconceivable that a man should believe the universal and perfect government of God and heartily approve of it, and yet entertain a distrust of the Judge of all the earth. While the mind realizes and the heart approves the perfection of the divine dispensations, the natural effect must be entire confidence in God. It is now proposed,

II. To show that entire confidence in God will afford perfect peace.

For this purpose it may be observed,

1. That they, who confide in God and stay themselves upon

him, see no absolute evil in the universe. For every creature, every object and every event is constantly and entirely under the divine direction; and under that direction must finally be an occasion of good. There is no natural or moral evil, which shall not finally praise God and promote the highest good of the universe. The desires, the designs and exertions of the wicked will be overruled for good. The criminal errors, defects, and imperfections of saints, shall finally subserve the great interests of the universe. And all the pains, distresses, calamities and punishments, which exist under the divine government, will be finally overbalanced by superior blessedness. There is not nor ever can be, any absolute evil in the universe. And they, who confide in God, realize this consoling truth and enjoy perfect peace. The mind that is stayed upon God, cannot discover, nor even conceive of any thing, to disturb it. All things are safe, amidst all the storms and tempests, which shake the world. For God is in the storms and directs them to the most desirable end, which is perfect peace. The friends of God, while they stay themselves upon him, can always say, "We have a strong city; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks." The eye of holy confidence always discerns perfect safety, which produces perfect peace. God has promised, and entire confidence believes that he will fulfil his pro-

mise, "that all things shall work together for good to them, that love him." And while those who love him, confide in his faithfulness, they see every thing calculated to do them good; and this must necessarily fill their minds with perfect peace. Such is the natural tendency of entire confidence in God. But on this subject we may appeal to the infallible evidence of fact. And this leads me to observe,

2. That entire confidence in God has produced perfect peace. A great number of God's creatures have stayed themselves upon him. All the angels in heaven have, from the beginning of the world to this day, entirely confided in God. They have never, in a single instance, distrusted the perfect government of the Deity, though they have been spectators of the most mysterious dispensations of his providence. They saw the rebellion in heaven, when Satan withdrew legions from their subjection to their Maker. At that time when there was war in heaven, and the city of the great king of the universe was attacked, his cordial subjects were kept in perfect peace, by their entire confidence in the power, wisdom and rectitude of his government. The same holy beings saw the apostacy of the human race, which had a most dark and threatening aspect upon the glory of God and the interests of his kingdom. But they did not fear any evil tidings from the new-made world, because their

hearts were fixed, trusting in God. There was perfect peace in heaven, while there was perfect despair on earth. In the course of the divine conduct towards mankind in succeeding ages, there have been times of great darkness and distress. When the old world was drowned; when Sodom and Gomorrah were burnt; when Israel were oppressed in Egypt; when Pharaoh and his hosts were destroyed; when the plagues broke out in the camp of Israel; when the surrounding nations united their counsels and their arms against Joshua; when ten tribes revolted from the God of Israel; when the two tribes were carried to Babylon; when Jerusalem was laid desolate; when the Messiah was slain by wicked hands; when the whole nation of the Jews were dispersed over the world; when the christian church was persecuted; when the man of sin arose; and since that time, when the whole world have been combined against the cause of Christ; the angels of heaven have been spectators; and yet they have constantly looked upon all these scenes in perfect peace. Their minds have never been disturbed by a single event since they came into existence. The only reason is, they have stayed themselves upon God. Their confidence has been entire and constant. And this is a demonstration, that perfect peace is the infallible consequence of perfect confidence.

But let us come to more familiar scenes. God has had some cordial friends among our rebellious race from age to age; and they have placed entire confidence in his wise and holy government, which has afforded them perfect peace, under the most dark and trying circumstances. Noah was perfect in his generation and confided in God, who kept him in perfect peace and safety, amidst a perishing world. Abraham, in all his changes and trials, trusted in God and was kept in perfect peace. Jacob confided in God when his brother Esau came to destroy him, and God kept him in perfect peace. When the camp of Israel rose in rebellion and refused to go forward to Canaan, Joshua confided in God, and perfect peace was the effect of his confidence. When Samuel delivered the awful message to Eli, he confided in God and enjoyed perfect peace under his holy dispensations. When David was driven from his throne and his kingdom, he confided in God, which gave him perfect peace. And when he lay upon his death-bed and was leaving the world, in which he felt deeply interested, entire confidence in God afforded him perfect peace. Hear his last words, "although my house be not so with God, yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure; and this is all my salvation and all my desire." What entire confidence did Heze-

kiah place in God; and how did he possess his soul in peace! He said "Good is the word of the Lord," though it threatened the most wasting judgments. The bereaved Shunamite placed entire confidence in God and enjoyed the happy effect of it. When she was asked "Is it well with thee? Is it well with thy husband? is it well with the child?" She answered—*It is well.*" She enjoyed perfect peace, because she stayed herself upon God. The prophet Habakkuk in a time of great calamity said—"Though the fig tree should not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vine; the labor of the olive shall fail and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls; yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation." He placed entire confidence in God, which afforded him perfect peace of mind. When Paul's friends tried to dissuade him from going to Jerusalem and placed the dangers before him in the most lively and affecting colours, he replied, "What, mean ye to weep and break my heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." And our Lord himself trusted in God, and found perfect peace. When his tremendous sufferings approached him, he cheerfully said to his Father, in whom he confided, "Not my will, but thine be done." In a word, all good men

have always found that entire confidence in God has afforded perfect peace. Their peace has always been in proportion to their confidence in the Lord Jehovah, in whom there is everlasting strength.

IMPROVEMENT.

1. If entire confidence in God affords perfect peace, then saints would enjoy *constant* as well as *perfect* peace, if they did not withdraw their confidence in God. Their want of peace always arises from their want of confidence. For there is in God the same foundation for peace at all times, that there is at any time. And their peace must always be as perfect as their confidence. It is certainly a very great error ever to withdraw their confidence from God in any degree. But this error their spiritual enemies constantly tempt saints to commit. The opinions, the pursuits, the practices and the enjoyments of this evil and faithless world press like a strong and violent current against the faith and peace of saints, to turn their hearts from God. Satan, the father of lies, employs all his art, power and malice against their faith. If he can only withdraw their confidence from God, he can easily disturb their minds and destroy their peace. And contrary to reason, to conscience, to scripture and experience, saints do often withdraw their confidence from God, on whom they ought to trust forever, with all their hearts. As soon as

they depart from God through an evil heart of unbelief, all light, joy, hope and peace depart from their minds. And when saints withdraw their confidence from God, they are often, if not always more restless and unhappy than sinners, who have never experienced the comfort and peace, which arise from staying the mind upon God. Present faith in God is necessary to present peace; and constant faith to constant peace. If saints would always maintain entire confidence in God, their peace would be as perfect and as constant as the power, goodness, wisdom and faithfulness of God, in whom they trust.

2. Since entire confidence in God affords perfect peace, the darkness and gloominess, to which saints are subject, are not owing to their religion, but to their want of it. It must be acknowledged, that real saints are liable to darkness and gloominess; and to greater darkness and gloominess than any other persons. Their darkness and distress of mind, when their hearts turn from God, are as great as the light, the comfort and joy they have found by trusting in him. Hence the most eminent saints have sunk into the greatest darkness and trouble of mind, when they have withdrawn their hearts from God through unbelief. Jacob was involved in total darkness, and expected nothing but sorrow, when Joseph and Benjamin were taken from him.— Though Elijah had such great

courage and boldness at one time in the service of God, yet he fled with great fear and distress when Jezebel threatened his life. From the psalms of David it appears that his darkness, and distress, and fear, sometimes overwhelmed his spirit. He says—"As with a sword in my bones, mine enemies reproach me; while they say daily unto me, Where is thy God?" Job was no less afflicted with darkness and distress under his numerous and heavy calamities. Jeremiah accounted his life a burden, and his office a curse under his severe trials. But all their darkness, distress and complaints were owing to want of confidence. When they renewed their confidence, their peace was restored, and they were filled with hope and joy through faith in God. While saints place entire confidence in God, they leave themselves and the universe with comfort and joy in his hands; and have no desire that any object or event should be different from what God has determined it shall be. But when their faith declines and fails, all their cares and burdens roll back upon themselves, and they find nothing but darkness, distress, weakness and fear. Yet the return of their confidence removes these evils, and restores perfect peace to their minds, as certainly as light excludes darkness, or strength removes weakness. Real religion stays the mind upon God and fills the heart with love, hope, joy and peace. The inconstancy and im-

perfection of true saints in respect to confidence and holiness are as great as the inconstancy and imperfection of their spiritual consolations and enjoyments. It is not religion but the want of it, that renders saints unhappy, gloomy and dark in their minds.

3. Since entire confidence in God affords perfect peace, they, whose hearts have been sanctified, have experienced a great, happy and sensible change. The heart of every human being is, by nature, deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. Nothing but darkness, error, and delusion pleases such a heart. All the objects, to which sinners look, and in which they trust, are perfect vanity and deceit. In all their hopes, designs, exertions and enjoyments, they experience disappointment and perplexity. Their unhappiness and misery arise entirely from the withdrawment of their affections from God. And there is in the universe no other object, in which they can trust with any safety or peace. But when the hearts of sinners are renewed, and they receive the love of the truth through the power and grace of the Holy Spirit, they then turn to God with all their hearts, and they trust in him with entire confidence. They then find rest to their souls and enjoy perfect peace. They are at peace with God; with his holiness, justice, goodness, truth and grace.— They are at peace with the decrees of God; and rejoice that he

has, in his eternal purpose according to the counsel of his own will, for his own glory, fore-ordained whatsoever comes to pass. They are at peace with the conduct of God; and are pleased that he turns, and moves, and governs the universe by his own wise, holy and sovereign agency, and works all things after the counsel of his own will. They are at peace with the law of God and delight in its holy commands, and submit to its dreadful penalty with perfect approbation and complacence. They are at peace with the prince of peace; they see his majesty and meekness, his glory and beauty, his truth and grace; and they love him, for his own excellence, with supreme, ardent and joyful affection. They are at peace with the children of God and bind themselves to the true church by the strong and tender bonds of truth and love. They are at peace with themselves.— And they are at peace with all things. In this state of perfect peace, true converts are kept, so long as their minds are stayed upon God. Such is the great, happy and sensible change, which exists in every person whose heart is renewed by the Holy Spirit, and who turns to God with holy confidence. Confidence in God is one of the first exercises of a new heart. And such confidence always affords perfect peace.

4. If confidence in God is necessary to perfect peace, then the time will come when all sinners

will be entirely destitute of peace. Sinners generally say, peace and safety unto themselves. They wickedly and vainly flatter themselves, that they shall have peace, though they walk in the way of their own hearts. But the way of peace they have not known. And when the darkness and delusion, in which they now choose to walk, shall be removed, and they shall be awakened from their stupidity, they will see and feel that they are opposed to God and his decrees and his conduct, his law, and his gospel. And they will find, when they are removed from this state of trial, that the things of their peace are for ever hidden from their eyes; and that no joy nor peace, nor hope can ever for a moment arise in their hearts.— They will find that there never can be a single object, or event, or prospect in the universe, that can afford the least comfort, or relief to their minds. Every thing in God and his law, in Jesus Christ and the gospel, in heaven and in hell, in their fellow-creatures and themselves, will fill their minds with darkness and despair.

5. Since entire confidence in God affords perfect peace, the time will come when all saints shall enjoy perfect happiness.— Under all their trials, changes, and sorrows in this life, their confidence increases. And when removed from this world of darkness and delusion, their faith will be constant. Their hearts will nev-

er for a moment turn from God with the least dissatisfaction, despondence, or distrust. Their knowledge, their love, their faith, their peace and their joy will continue and increase for ever and ever. As they shall review the wonders of divine power, wisdom, and goodness from the morning of the creation until the final judgment and shall see the greatness, the glory and beauty of God, as they will be displayed in heaven and hell for ever, their hearts will be enlarged with holy confidence in him. In the universe they will never perceive a single object or event, that can destroy or disturb their confidence for a moment. But all things will serve to enlarge and strengthen their confidence in their holy and blessed creator. With their faith, their love, their peace, their joy and their praise will increase for ever and ever. "I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunders, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth."

A STRANGE THING.

Messrs. Editors,

I find by conversation with my neighbours, and from the perusal of books and pamphlets which they are frequently putting into my hands, that there is an opinion extensively prevalent that all mankind will be saved. Those with

whose views I am best acquainted, generally believe that there is no punishment after death. Sin, it is thought, involves its own punishment. Consequently when mankind cease to sin, as it is supposed they all will at death, there will be an end to all their sufferings. This opinion appears to me *strange*, not because it is entirely new, but because it is inconsistent with so many other things which I have long considered as facts, and which so far as I know, have been considered as facts by others. It appears to me *strange*, because it places almost every thing connected with it, in a new and singular attitude. It is not my object, in the present communication, directly to attack this opinion, but only to show my readers how *strange* it appears, when considered in connexion with certain truths and facts, which are generally, if not universally acknowledged. I shall here make nothing of the fact that the primitive Fathers of the Church did not believe this opinion, that the voice of antiquity is decidedly against it, that the truly pious of every age have considered it of a peculiarly dangerous tendency, that individuals of abandoned lives make it a refuge to shelter themselves from the fear of deserved punishment, that it is often embraced with little reflection, and given up when the near approach of death disposes the mind to a serious consideration of what the scriptures reveal respecting futurity. Although I firm-

ly believe, that there is something in these facts, which justifies a strong presumption against the opinion, and which cannot be candidly considered by its warmest advocates without serious misgivings; yet I choose not, in this place, to insist upon any thing which they present, as an argument against it. But there are facts, to which I would turn the attention of my readers, which appear to me unaccountable, upon the supposition that the doctrine of universal salvation is taught in the gospel.

The *first* of these is the *solicitude*, which the Apostles manifested for the salvation of their hearers. They conversed and preached, and prayed, and laboured, as though they were deeply concerned for the salvation of their fellow-men. Paul, in his Epistle to the Romans, expresses the anxiety which he felt for his brethren the Jews. "I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, that I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish myself accursed from Christ, for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh." In the first verse of the next chapter, he gives us the reason why he was so anxious respecting his brethren. "My heart's desire, and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be *saved*." That the salvation of his hearers was the object of Paul's *exertions*, as well as prayers, is more than intimated in

the following passage. "I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means *save* some." Paul was anxious, not only so to conduct *himself* as to secure the salvation of his fellow creatures, but that *all* to whom the treasures of the gospel were committed, should do the same. This is apparent from the following address to Timothy. "Take heed unto thyself and unto thy doctrine; continue in them; for in doing this thou shalt both *save* thyself and them that hear thee." Now upon the supposition, that Paul, and the rest of the Apostles, knew that all would be saved, it appears to me *strange*, that they should manifest this *solicitude* about it. It is not natural for mankind to be anxious that an event should take place, when they know infallibly, that it cannot be prevented. We see no one anxious lest the sun should not continue to rise and set, and the seasons observe their appointed successions. And the only conceivable reason is, all men are satisfied that the rising and setting of the sun, and the rotation of the seasons will continue as they have done. Now if Paul knew, and if it is a truth he did unquestionably know it, that all men would be saved, he could not have had any anxiety respecting the salvation of his brethren or any one else, any more than those who know the sun will rise to-morrow, can be anxious lest they be left in total darkness. Paul's anxiety respecting the salvation

of his brethren and others, and the great exertions which he made, and endeavoured to influence others to make in order to save them, are strange and unaccountable things, upon every other supposition, but that of his considering them in danger of perishing, and his seriously fearing that many of them actually would perish.

2. If the doctrine of universal salvation was taught by the Apostles, it appears to me strange, that their hearers were so much *alarmed* at their preaching. That the preaching of the Apostles did excite great alarm and anxiety among their hearers, is a fact with which few can be unacquainted. On the day of Pentecost three thousand were pricked at their heart upon the hearing of Peter's sermon; and under the influence of their deep anxiety, they exclaimed, "Men and Brethren, what shall we do." It seems to have been a conviction of his guilty perishing condition, produced by the doctrine of Paul, that influenced the Jailor to inquire, what he should do to be saved. When Paul stood before Felix the Roman Governor, and "reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix *trembled*." Now if the Apostles believed the doctrine of universal salvation, they were doubtless understood to preach it. But it appears to me *strange*, that their hearers, while listening to the cheering truth that all will be saved, or to what evidently implied this, should *tremble*, give

signs of the deepest distress, and with tears entreat the apostles to inform them what they must do to be saved. Their deep solicitude is perfectly *natural*, upon the supposition that they were taught the reality of a future judgment, and the danger in which they stood of perishing forever, as a just punishment for their sins. We can easily see that a firm belief in this truth, and a lively apprehension of it, would produce the very trembling and alarm, and inquiry which were produced. But as the opinion under consideration is inconsistent with their having been taught any such thing, it renders the fact of their deep anxiety wholly unaccountable. To get rid of the difficulty, we will for the present suppose, that they were *needlessly* alarmed, as many are occasionally thought to be at the present day.

3. Admitting the fact that Christ and the Apostles taught the doctrine of universal salvation, it appears to me inexpressibly strange, that their hearers manifested so much *opposition* to their preaching. Christ and the Apostles doubtless preached the truth plainly and faithfully. Of course, if the doctrine of universal salvation is true, they preached this doctrine,—they were understood to preach it, and they never preached any thing inconsistent with it. Now what there is in this doctrine so repugnant to the feelings of the human heart, as to excite such opposition as Christ and the Apostles

encountered from the world, I never could see. That the feelings of all men in an unsanctified state are opposed to the doctrine of future and eternal punishment, is a truth which every one knows from his own experience, as well as from observation. On the supposition that Christ and his Apostles preached *this* doctrine, it would be perfectly easy to account for all the opposition which was made against them. But why all the world, as it were, should rise up against these holy men, and persecute them even unto death, only for declaring the glad tidings of the salvation of all men, is one of those unaccountable things which I acknowledge myself unable to explain.

4. Upon the supposition that all will be saved, there is something peculiarly strange in the language, in which Christ and the Apostles speak of the future state of the righteous and the wicked. With the idea in his mind, that it was the design of Christ and the Apostles to teach the certain salvation of all men, let the reader consider for a moment a few of their expressions, and see if there is not something peculiarly *strange* in them. "Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." In Luke, "Fear him which after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell; yea say unto you fear him." It is not a little surprising that Christ,

who upon the principle here assumed, wished to guard his hearers against any apprehensions of a punishment beyond this life, should here speak of God's being able to destroy the *soul*, as well as the body; to destroy the soul in *hell*, after he had killed the body.

Besides, I cannot see the conclusiveness of our Saviour's reasoning in this place. What if God is *able* to destroy the *soul*, as well as the body? This is no good reason why we should fear *him*, rather than any other being, if it is known that he *will* not do it. What if God is *able* to destroy the soul in *hell*? If it is known that there is no such place of future punishment as *hell*, and if God is so good that he will not destroy the soul in *hell*, I do not see why the circumstance that he is *able* to do it, need to frighten us. I doubt not Christ did reason conclusively. But in this case I cannot see the force of his argument, unless he meant to teach the dreadful doctrine, that the souls of the wicked will go to *hell*, as a place of punishment after the decease of their bodies.

"Enter ye in at the strait gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat; because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." Now as Christ believed in the doctrine of universal salvation, I should suppose, that instead of *exhorting* his hearers to enter in at the strait gate, he would

have told them that they *would* enter in at the strait gate; that instead of using the alarming expression, "Wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat," he would have told them honestly that there is no way to destruction, and of course that none are going there; that instead of saying, very nearly in the style of the illiberal partialists of the present day, "strait is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life and few there be that find it," he would have adopted the more catholic language of another class, and without hesitation declared, that the gate of Heaven is *wide*, that the way thither is *broad*, and that *all* will find it.

"Marvel not at this, the hour cometh in which all that are in their graves shall hear his voice and come forth, they that have done good to the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil to the resurrection of damnation." Should I hear a preacher at the present day use such an expression as this, without any explanation, I should naturally conclude that he believed, not only in the future resurrection of the bodies of all the dead, but of the subsequent happiness of the righteous, and misery of the wicked. This, I cannot doubt, is the conclusion of ninety nine in a hundred, the first time they hear the expression. It is truly astonishing then, that Christ who is supposed to have known

that these doctrines are totally false, and extremely pernicious, should have used such an expression. Not one in fifty of those who now preach universal salvation, would, if it presumed, have the imprudence to drop this expression, or any one similar to it, without at the same time so explaining it, as to prepare his audience to receive a meaning essentially different from the most obvious sense of the words.

In his explanation of the parable of the tares and the wheat, Christ says "the field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one; the enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels. As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be at the end of the world. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity. And shall cast them into a furnace of fire; there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." When I consider that this is an *explanation* of a parable which Christ had previously spoken; an attempt to make more *plain* to them, what he had left in comparative obscurity, I have no words to express the astonishment which I feel at his language. In-

stead of finding the doctrine of universal salvation plainly and unequivocally taught, as we might expect, if Christ believed it himself, from such a parable as this, we find here a *distinction* made between the children of the kingdom and the children of the wicked one, an assertion that those who do iniquity, shall be gathered out of the kingdom of God, and cast into a lake of fire, and an intimation that the *righteous* only shall shine forth in the kingdom of their Father. How much more like a universalist would Christ have spoken, and if he meant to intimate that all would be saved, how much more generally, as well as easily would he have been understood, if he had been silent respecting a *distinction* between the children of the kingdom, and the children of the wicked one, and called them all the children of God. And, instead of dooming a part to a lake of fire, as is frequently done in the pulpits of those now termed bigoted ecclesiastics, he had said, not that the *righteous* shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father, but that *all the human race* "shall shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." Christ was honest and sincere, plain and faithful in his instructions. But *how* he could be so, and use such language as is found in the explanation of this parable, while he believed that all would be saved, is certainly among the mysteries which are not yet understood.

"When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory; and before him shall be gathered all nations; and he shall separate them one from another as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats; and he shall set the sheep on his right hand and the goats on the left. Then shall the king say unto them on his right hand, come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart, ye cursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal." Now if the opinion, that there is to be a day of judgment at which all the human race will be summoned before Christ, the righteous separated from the wicked, the one received to endless happiness, and the other consigned to ceaseless perdition, be groundless, it is to me peculiarly *strange*, that Christ, who must have known the falsehood of this doctrine, should give so much occasion for the belief of it, as he does when he speaks of all nations' being gathered before him, of his separating the righteous from the wicked as a shepherd divideth the sheep from the goats, of his inviting the one to the enjoyment of that kingdom prepared for them by his Father, and of his bidding the other de-

part accursed into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. If he did not believe this doctrines, it is certainly natural to suppose, that he would have been more cautious, than to use language which seems unequivocally to express it. That thousands of honest inquirers after truth, have understood him to assert this doctrine in the passage before us, is what few, if any, will pretend to deny; and that he knew they would thus understand him is as generally acknowledged. It appears to me *strange*, therefore, that he had not used expressions that would have clearly conveyed his meaning, and prevented the numerous distressing fears, as well as hurtful errors which his language has occasioned. Let my readers consider, that Christ *knew* the truth upon this subject, that he was able to express it with the greatest plainness, that he had no intention of frightening them by false exaggerated representations, but that his real object was to communicate the most important practical information; and then let them tell me, how he came to use language which so much resembles that of those, who preach the gloomy doctrine of future and everlasting punishment.

The conduct of the apostles, upon this subject, appears to me equally strange with that of Christ. Considering them as Universalists, designing to teach that there will be no punishment after this life, I am wholly unable to reconcile

their expressions with truth and sincerity. Paul's language to the Corinthians, upon the future condition of mankind, very nearly resembles the language of those who preach in opposition to the Universalists, the doctrine of future punishment. "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every man may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done whether it be good or bad. If Paul believed that there is no judgment after death, and no punishment only what is suffered in this life, it is very difficult, to say the least, to tell what he meant by our receiving at the judgment the things done in our *bodies*. Nor does there appear to be any propriety in his intimating, as he appears to do in the following passage that mankind go to judgment *after* death. "It is appointed unto men once to die, and *after* this the judgment. An Universalist might, perhaps, in consequence of finding such expressions in the scriptures make use of them in his public discourses. But if he were a man of prudence, he would carefully guard the minds of his hearers against a misunderstanding of them by his own explanations. When, therefore, I find Paul freely using such expressions and accompanying them with no explanations that seem in the least to detract from their most obvious sense, I am compelled to conclude that he was a very imprudent preacher, or, that he was no Universalist.

I have often heard serious and worthy ministers of the gospel, unhappily tinctured, however with the belief of future and eternal punishment, censured for preaching too much terror. And there certainly has been, at times, some things in their awful denunciation against sinners, which were enough to make the stoutest heart tremble. But what has surprised me more than any thing else relative to this subject, is the part that Paul, and others of the apostles, use expressions upon this subject as strong, and as full of terror, as any thing which ever dropped from their lips. I never heard the most offensive of these preachers say any thing which appeared to me more unequivocally to assert the doctrine of future and eternal punishment, more indicative of God's displeasure with the wicked, or better calculated to frighten them, than the following language of Paul. "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power. It is possible that in the Apostles days, people were not quite so particular in regard to the language used, as they are in these days of increased light and refinement. But one thing must be obvious to all, should an Universalist preacher now

make a free use of such expressions of the Apostles as that above quoted, without accompanying them with his own interpretations, his hearers would conclude that he had changed his sentiments.— These remarks may lead my readers to conclude that Paul was more careless, or imprudent in his language than the rest of the apostles. But I am far from thinking that this is a fact. Although I dislike to charge him or any of his brethren with imprudence or insincerity; yet upon the supposition that they believed in the salvation of all men, I say again, I cannot reconcile their language with their sentiments, or with any serious intention of communicating them.— We will now suppose that John was an Universalist, and at the same time, consider for a moment, the language which he uses in relating a vision which he had of future things. “I saw a great white throne and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heavens fled away. And I saw the dead small and great stand before God; and the books were opened; and another book was opened which was the book of life; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them, and they were judged every man according to their works. And

death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.”— Here I cannot refrain from remarking that it is a *strange* thing, that John, who, as we have supposed, was perfectly free from any apprehension of a judgment after death, should have had just such a vision as this. And admitting, as we must, that he did have it, it is unaccountable that he should not have had the prudence to express himself a little differently, or to add some explanation to his words, which would have satisfied every honest reader, that he did not mean *all* which he seems to say. If he had told us, expressly, that he did not mean by what he had said respecting the dead small and great standing before God, to intimate that any of the human race would ever be raised from the dead; that he did not design, by the book's being opened and the dead's being judged out of the things written in the books, to be understood that any would hereafter be called to an account for what they had done in this life; and that by his declaration, “Whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire,” he had not the most distant thought of alarming any one with the fear of future punishment, although it would then have been impossible, upon any fair principles of interpretation, to ascertain

what he did mean by his expressions, yet he might have appeared honest and sincere, and prudent. But to leave his expressions in the unguarded form in which they now stand, looks like a species of imprudence directly calculated to lead honest, sincere and even discerning minds into the gloomy belief of a day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men; a species of imprudence which we are sure would destroy the popularity, and essentially injure the cause of any Universalist at the present day, and of which, I speak to their credit, none of this class, within my knowledge, is ever guilty.

5. If there is no punishment after death, there appears to me to be something strange, in God's treatment of his creatures in this world. Generally speaking, the righteous and the wicked are here treated essentially alike.—Although there are instances, in which God does by his providence, inflict signal punishments upon the wicked, and confer signal rewards upon the righteous in this life; yet these instances being comparatively rare, must be considered among the *extraordinary* events of his providence. God's general rule of dealing with his creatures in this life, a rule from which he never departs, except in extraordinary cases, and for special purposes, is expressed in the following words: "He maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." Solomon seems

to have been convinced, that as a general rule, God treats the righteous and the wicked alike in this world. "All things, he says, come alike unto all; there is one event to the righteous, and to the wicked." In another place, he says, "there is a vanity done upon the earth; that there be just men, unto whom it happeneth according to the work of the wicked; again there be wicked men to whom it happeneth according to the work of the righteous." Now if it is a fact, as is unequivocally asserted in these words, that rewards and punishments are not always distributed in this life according to the deserts of men, it is *strange* to me, that there should not be a *future* retribution. To my mind, there is no truth more indisputable than this: the goodness of God must lead him, sooner or later, to treat all his creatures according to their characters.

Besides, upon the principle that all will be immediately happy after death, there is often something *strange*, even in those instances in which God *makes* a distinction between the righteous and the wicked in this world. Whenever the judgments of God upon the wicked are such as to carry them out of the world, they must, for ought I can see, become blessings, as in such cases, they are always instrumental of removing the subjects of them from this world to heaven. Now the flood, which has uniformly been considered as a judgment upon those who per-

ished in its waters, must, upon the principle here assumed, be considered as a judgment upon Noah, and a blessing to those who were destroyed! Reader, look at this subject one moment. Those who perished, all went immediately to heaven, where they were made perfectly happy in the enjoyment of God; while Noah, after having witnessed the agonies of a dying world, and enduring the sorrows of this seemingly dreadful catastrophe for forty days and forty nights, was left an afflicted, solitary individual, with no society but his own family, and no possessions but the ruins of his ark. To this solitary pilgrimage he was driven, for no other reason than for being a good man, while the true cause of his companions' all being received so soon to heaven was, they had corrupted their way before the Lord! A similar reason must be assigned why Lot, deprived of his wife, and dispossessed of his inheritance, was obliged to linger out a pitiable existence in the little city, Zoar, while the inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah, after one momentary pang, from the devouring element in which they were enveloped, were all received to the mansions of bliss; and why Moses was required to endure the labors, and hardships, and self-denial of a journey through the wilderness, and to hear, for the space of forty years, the murmurs and reproaches of a rebellious people, while Pharaoh and his hosts, who malicious-

ly pursued him, all safely entered the rest prepared for the people of God, the moment they were overwhelmed in the red sea. This is the strange attitude in which the opinion under consideration presents all the judgments of God, which have ever swept the wicked from the earth. So far from having been evils to them who suffered them, they appear to have been blessings!

On the whole, I cannot but think it *strange*, that a doctrine, attended with so many strange things, should be thought to be true. There must be something strange in the structure of that mind, or in the feelings of which it is the subject, which can believe this doctrine, in the face of so much plain testimony, and in opposition to so many well-known facts. The mind which can believe this doctrine in opposition to the scriptural facts, and scriptural testimony which present themselves against it, cannot be prevented, by *scripture*, from believing any thing which it wishes to be true. Do you ask, reader, what is the reason, why so many readily receive the false and absurd doctrine which has now been considered. In the following scripture, you have an answer.—“Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart.”

A.

LIBERTY AND NECESSITY.

[We insert the following, with a desire and expectation that some of our Correspondents will consider and answer some parts of it, which may be viewed as objectionable.]

The great difficulty in the way of coming to satisfactory and harmonious conclusions in our reasonings on moral subjects, is, that the same word has different shades of thought associated with it in different minds. The idea of *liberty* in one man's mind, is that of freedom from all external influence whatever, while in the mind of another, it is only that of power to choose, refuse, and act accordingly, under the various kinds of influence to which he may be subject. So the notion of *necessity*, as it exists in the mind of the man who has formed all his ideas of it from what he has seen of the operation of mechanical powers, is very unlike what it would have been, if he had been a thorough going scholar in the philosophy of Dr. Brown. Hence it is that men often contend until their passions rise to almost open war, when in fact their opinions are not at all discordant. When the philosopher comes to use the word *necessity*, on moral subjects, the mechanic at once dissents from him, and refuses any longer to give him audience. And why is this?—Not because their sentiments are at variance, but because one receives a wrong idea from the language which the other uses,—an idea which he would himself reject with equal abhorrence. And yet, instead of

entering into such an explanation as would enable each fully to apprehend the other's views, they enter the lists of controversy, gird on their armour, and rush to battle.

So it has been, in a great degree, with the controversialists respecting *liberty* and *necessity*. There is little room to doubt, that they have often contended for *names*, rather than *things*,—that if each could have justly apprehended the other's views, difference would have ceased at once. What the libertarian contends for, is that the mind acts *perfectly free*; that *it is free to follow its own choice*, without any external influence to interfere with its thus acting. But what does he mean, when he says the mind acts perfectly free, that it acts as it chooses, and without constraint, follows its choice? There is one thing, and it would seem as if there were only one, that he can mean; that when two objects come within the mind's view, it prefers one to the other, and then not by constraint, but of its own pleasure, pursues that which it prefers, or follows its own choice. But why did the mind *choose* between the two objects, why did it not *come to a balance* between them? Simply because, in the mind's apprehension at the moment of making the choice, there was a feeling or notion of disparity between them,—a feeling that they were not alike desirable. I will ask again, why the mind made the choice it did; why was not the other object preferred?—Simply because, at the

moment of making the choice, there was in the mind not only a notion of disparity, but a feeling that the object which in the end was chosen, was more desirable than the other. And will the advocate for liberty feel any misgiving here? Will he deny that where the mind chooses between two objects, it chooses on the ground of a notion that the objects are not alike desirable? He will not, surely, if he will listen a moment to the testimony of his own consciousness. And if he will look into his mind's history he will find, not only that the fact of making a choice resulted from the notion of disparity, but that his choice fixed on the object it did, because the disparity was in favor of that object, and not because he willed to fix it there. He may trace back the history of his mental operations ever so far, and he will find uniformly that he has never chosen one thing in preference to another, except on the ground that the thing chosen appeared more desirable than the other; and that when there was this appearance, and apprehension, choice always succeeded. Is it not a fair inference then, that this apprehension of preference always will be followed by an actual choice of the object to which it refers? So the necessitarian concludes.—He looks at the history of the human mind, and in the manner in which these facts have taken place, he sees an unvarying uniformity. He now proceeds on the

ground of this uniformity in the past, to predict it of the future. His assertion is, that of several objects which the mind contemplates, that which appears more desirable will be chosen. This he affirms is absolutely *certain*; and here is all he means by necessity. The apprehension that one object is more desirable than another always precedes the act of choosing, and never fails of fixing the choice on the more desirable object. No matter how the fact of this antecedence and consequence is accounted for. Whether it depends on the constitution of mind, on the immediate will of God, or something distinct from either, is wholly foreign to the subject. It ever has been a fact, and the conclusion is, that it will ever continue such;—that the *cause*, or *principle* which has produced it hitherto, will continue to produce it,—call this cause, *necessity*, or *liberty*, or whatever else you please.

I will now make a few remarks in regard to the distinction of *natural* and *moral* necessity, and the ground of that distinction. In order to avoid misconception, I will express the relation of cause and effect, or antecedent and consequent, by the term *connexion*, instead of necessity. Not because the word necessity, when properly explained, is wholly unsuitable, but because it does not so well express the common notions of this relation; and more particularly, because there is always danger of losing sight of a formal definition,

and yielding to the influence of those notions which we generally associate with the word in common usage.

What, then, is the distinction, between that connexion of causes and effects, or antecedents and consequents, which may be called *natural*, and that which may be called *moral*? The connexion between the application of a spark to powder, and the consequent explosion of the powder, is obviously a *natural* or physical connexion. That between presenting to my mind an object adapted to awaken an affection of my heart, and the actual calling up of that affection, is no less obviously a *moral* connexion. The effect produced, in one case, is of a moral character, in the other it is not; and this is a sufficient reason for distinguishing the connexion in one case from that in the other.

Here, two questions may be asked. Are the effects in the two cases equally certain?—And how comes it to pass that in one case the effect is of a moral nature, and in the other is not?

In regard to the comparative certainty, I reply, that, "*cæteris paribus*," or every thing concerned in the two cases being alike prepared to act in its proper character, the certainty is the same; and if any prefer the language, so is the necessity. It is certain that the application of fire to powder *properly prepared*, will produce explosion. It is no less certain that the presentation of the character

of God to an intelligent mind alike in its *proper state*, will awaken an affection of holy love. It is as *certain*, and if any choose, it is as *necessary*. But what is meant by necessity? What is the necessity of the explosion in the case of the powder? We know not. There is one thing which we do know; there is an absolute certainty. But of a necessity which lies at the foundation of this certainty, we have no distinct notion. All is fancy and imagination. These remarks are alike true of either case, so that in either case the connexion as to certainty or necessity, is precisely the same.

Here, then, comes up the second question, viz. how comes it to pass that the effect is of a moral nature, in one case, and in the other is not? To this question the answer is most easy. The ground of the distinction is simply the fact, that in one case there is a *feeling* that the effect is *right* or *wrong*, and in the other there is not. There is in one case a feeling that the effect is or is not as it should be; in the other case there is no such feeling. Now if any one ask, how this feeling comes to exist in one case, and how it lays the foundation for praise or blame;—I answer by asking how it comes to pass that this feeling does not exist in the other case, and how the absence of it precludes all possibility of praise or blame;—and one question is as proper and rational as the other, and admits of as appropriate an answer. The truth is, both

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questions relate to *ultimate facts*, which depend solely on divine appointment, and come not within the province of human investigation.

TENNET.

SUCCESS OF MISSIONS.

No. III.

Mission at Serampore.—This mission was commenced in the year 1793 by Mr. Thomas, a pious Surgeon and the Rev. Mr. Carey. Mr. Thomas had spent some time in India, and knowing their degraded condition, was desirous to do something for their relief. Under the patronage of the English Baptist Missionary Society, they sailed for Calcutta in June, 1793. The scene of their labours was among a vast population, whose cruel rites and debasing superstitions were truly shocking. There was every thing in the state of Hindoostan to discourage the missionary. Their rivetted belief in the antiquity of their own religious institutions, the extent and monstrous absurdity of their mythology, their superstitious reverence for the Gods, the Priests, the Sacred Books, and a thousand other consecrated objects, render them utterly averse to any new view of religion. Their extended system of polytheism, their law of Cast, forbidding all intercourse between different tribes, their numerous dialects, and many other obstacles found in the character and institu-

tions of the Hindoos, seemed to render the prospects of the missionaries almost hopeless. To the introduction of a system of theology, far less imposing and less congenial to their feelings, against the reverence they held for their own institutions fostered by every early association, and the long antiquity they claim for them, there was a difficulty of a most formidable nature. In the words of the lamented Ward—"Did ever any cause appear more hopeless? I well recollect this was the exact feeling when I arrived at Bengal. Every where we were advised to go back. Even some good men thought the attempt utterly impracticable." Having all these difficulties to contend with, immediate success could not be expected. A considerable time must be allowed for the missionaries to learn the language, to establish their character and acquire the confidence of the natives." "At the close of the seventh year," says one of the missionaries, "not one native appeared on the side of Christ, not one respecting whom we could indulge the least hope, that he was under christian impressions." Soon after that time they began to see the fruit of their labours. Our design does not require, neither will our limits permit us to enter into particular detail. If we take only a glance at the present missionary stations and the circumstances attending them, we shall see a pleasing contrast be-

tween the present and the former state and prospects of Hindoostan. For the last twenty years the mission has been making a gradual but steady progress. It has now nine stations in *Bengal*, several in the *upper provinces*, and three in the *Islands of the Indian Ocean*. The number of converts to the christian faith has been very considerable. More than a *thousand* persons have been initiated into the christian profession, and more than *six hundred* of these were formerly idolators or Mahometans. About *fifty* heathen converts are qualified for, and engaged in, superintending stations, and a number of the converted Hindoos have died happy in the faith of Christ, some of them leaving cheering evidence that they have gone to reap the rewards of the faithful. So many missionary stations in the heart of the Pagan world, and so many hundred Hindoos who have renounced Cast from their conviction of the truth of Christianity, are the most solid proofs of success that can be given.

If we now consider the other favourable changes that have taken place within twenty years, we shall see that many of the grand obstacles to christianizing India, are removed. The opposition of government has ceased, and authorities are now decidedly friendly to the mental and moral improvement of the natives, affording the most important aid to the missionary establishments. Institutions designed to facilitate the

progress of missionary operations have been established and multiplied. The following Societies have been formed:—The Calcutta Auxiliary Bible Society, which has published several versions of the scriptures in the Asiatic languages:—There are also Auxiliary Bible Societies in Madras, Bombay, Columba, Soomatra, Malacca, the Isle of France, Penang, Batavia and other places.—The School-Book Society, the object of which is to furnish schools and the natives generally with books:—The School Society, for the extension of schools among the natives:—Two Missionary Societies have been formed at Calcutta, and some funds raised in India for their support.

Other institutions have been reared by christian charity and by the common blessing of God, will ere long send forth the pure waters of life to fertilize the whole surrounding country. A college for Arabic literature, and the Calcutta Free School, and other Schools are in successful operation, and not less than 20,000 heathen children are now under instruction in India.

The missionaries have also established a College at Serampore, to which the heathen youth, from various parts of India, are flocking to receive the benefits of a liberal education.

By the instrumentality of the Bible Societies, five years ago, the Bible had been translated, in whole or in part, into *forty-four* different

languages. In that of Bengal and Orissa, spoken on a moderate estimate by about thirty millions of people, the whole Bible is printed and extensively circulated.

Now in view of these facts, have we not substantial proof of the reality of success? When we consider that already more than a thousand Hindoos have been converted to the christian faith, that there are so many missionary stations, so many societies and institutions whose object is to facilitate the means of instruction, so many bibles making their way through the empire of Satan,—that translations are daily advancing—that education is extending its operations in the most rapid manner,—and that converts from these heathen are almost daily added to the christian church; are we not taught that the most formidable difficulties are already removed, and that this grand apparatus will soon effect a moral revolution throughout all British India? Christian villages, composed wholly of native converts have already been contemplated, and every thing indicates the approach of a vast change in this spiritual wilderness. In view of what has already been accomplished, and of what is in operation, the christian may anticipate the final triumph of christianity in India, and rejoice in the prospect, that “her wilderness will soon be like Eden and her desert like the garden of the Lord.”

But, notwithstanding these facts which are so cheering to the friends of missions, it has been asserted that “no success has attended this mission.” Just at the time when the christian world had learned by the testimony of indubitable facts that the missionary cause in India was progressing with unexpected rapidity, we hear it said, “this mission has proved unsuccessful.” The Christian Disciple, after having assumed as a fact, that, this mission had exerted no favorable influence upon the character and condition of the Hindoos, find the cause to be the idolatrous character of the religion of the missionaries. “The cause” to use the words of the Disciple, “of the disappointment of missionary endeavors, we conceive to be deeper than in any want of support for the undertaking, or of ability in the agents. We apprehend that there exists an insurmountable obstacle to the success of missionary operations in India in the character of the systems which have been offered to support the old Idolatry. The Hindoo religion is a religion of mystery and imagination. When overthrown it will not be by another faith of the same character, but by a faith founded upon evidence and not opposed to reason. Pure and not orthodox christianity is the system which will evangelize India.” And again this work says, “It is one of the weighty reasons why we wish and pray that the various systems of ortho-

doxy may be supplanted by a purer faith, *that they present the great obstacle to the diffusion of christianity over the world.*" It does not come within our own province at this time to notice the *liberality* of the above remarks. From the facts already mentioned, it will be perceived that both the premises and conclusions are wholly gratuitous. We do not say that the liberal belief would not spread *more* rapidly. Perhaps it would. But it would still remain a question whether the cause were not to be found in the circumstance, that it had so little in it to distinguish it from natural religion,—or that it does not inculcate a morality so rigid and pure, and so averse to all the corrupt propensities of the Hindoos. They would probably have less objection to embracing a system of christianity which would allow them to retain Cast, and some other of their absurdities. Our limits will not permit us to enlarge upon this subject. We can only express our regret that the editors of this *liberal* work should gratuitously assert that no success has attended this mission, for the apparent purpose of building upon it an argument against the orthodox system. We say *apparent* purpose, for we would not charge them with intentional misrepresentation. The orthodox system they consider as "the great obstacle to the diffusion of christianity over the world." We have no disposition to form any invidious comparisons.

But as the orthodox system has been considered "the great obstacle to the progress of missionary efforts and success, we may here ask, of what class of christians have been the missionaries to the heathen in this and other countries, in the present and past ages? Who are they that have imbibed a missionary spirit and have sacrificed all the endearments of kindred and home, to wear out their lives in an inhospitable clime and among an idolatrous people, for the purpose of bringing them to a knowledge of Christ? Who are they that are now beginning to feel their obligations to send the gospel to the heathen? Who are engaged in concert for prayer in behalf of the heathen? Whence this marshalling of so many forces and this furnishing of so many treasures? Whence so many missionary stations in heathen lands, and so many already brought to a knowledge of the christian religion? Which system of faith produces the greatest degree of pity and compassion for the heathen, and which is now facilitating the progress of christianity in so many parts of the world? Is that system of belief which has done all this to be accounted the grand obstacle to the diffusion of christianity?

But notwithstanding all that has been expended, and done, and suffered in this good cause, they who have been engaged in it are charged with the want of success, and this is attributed to their system

of belief. But it will be seen from the facts already referred to, and more fully from facts we shall hereafter notice, that the charge is unfounded, and the inference of consequence untrue. Every man who will bestow proper attention on this subject in examining the authentic missionary documents, will perceive that this, as well as other missions, has been attended with great success. This success was not immediate, and it was not expected. Nor do we claim perfection for the missionaries. 'In a work of such magnitude, in which so many parts are to be fitly joined together, there doubtless may have been many errors committed by those who had every thing to learn by experience. And it would be most unreasonable to expect that the whole plan should go into magnificent operation without embarrassment, and the many millions of India be converted with-

out delay. We have seen from well attested fact that as much has been accomplished, as could reasonably have been expected. God has approved the work and bestowed his blessing. If facts are to test the truth and efficacy of the system, that system which has accomplished so much is entitled to our confidence and belief. We close this number by referring the reader again to a fact connected with the mission of the united Brethren. While they preached only the *morality* of the gospel they had no success. But no sooner did they preach "*Jesus Christ and him crucified*," declaring unto the Greenlanders the word of reconciliation in its native simplicity, than they beheld its converting and saving power. This reached the hearts of their audience, and produced the most astonishing and happy effects."

W.

EXTRACTS.

Memoirs of Mrs. H——, who closed a life of exemplary piety with Christian comfort and resignation.

Early in life she was a subject of serious impressions, obtained a hope in Christ, and made a profession of religion. She was far from being confident and assured when speaking of the exercises of her mind; but gave good evidence to others that her hope was well

founded. Her life appeared to be that of a pious, prayerful, humble and exemplary christian. In the management of the concerns of her family she was discreet and prudent. The heart of her husband safely trusted in her. To her children she was a tender and affectionate parent, a pious and able counsellor.

Such was the general character she exhibited in life; but the

principle design of this sketch is to describe some of the leading exercises of her mind during her last sickness. In the first stage of her illness, having little hope of recovery, she was greatly tried with the thought of leaving the children, who were most of them in that period of life when most exposed to be deceived and led astray by the allurements, amusements and vanities of the world. She found it difficult to bring her mind to a willingness to part with them, and commit them wholly to God. This inordinate anxiety, and want of confidence in the great disposer of all things she greatly lamented. It seemed to be the chief source of her trouble. She did not wish the clergyman of the society, when he called to visit her, to pray for her life, but that she might be entirely resigned to the divine will. This resignation she soon obtained in a very considerable degree ; and said that she was willing to give all up, to commit herself, her children, and all her concerns into the hands of God. To preserve and establish her mind in this patient, resigned and submissive frame, she would frequently reflect upon the sufferings of Christ, to which he cheerfully submitted in our stead, and mention the impropriety and inexcusableness of our complaints under trials and sufferings comparatively small, and which fall so far below our desert.

At times the love of God seemed to be remarkably shed abroad

in her soul. Her heart was filled with such raptures of joy as overcame the fears of death, disarmed the king of terrors, and rendered him lovely in her sight, as a messenger of peace. With such views she several times expressed herself to the minister, as he called to visit her, in nearly the following words. As he came to the side of the the bed, on which she lay, expecting hourly to depart, she took him by the hand, and in a cheerful voice, and with joy impressed on her countenance, said, "How sweet death is. It is pleasant as the morning, sweet as the honey and honey comb, to go to my dear Redeemer." Seasons of social prayer were exceedingly precious in her sight ; and on such occasions she appeared remarkably fervent and devout. Her joy was at times like that described by the Apostle, "Whom having not seen ye love. In whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory."

She uniformly manifested a thorough conviction and feeling sense of her entire unworthiness, and ascribed all the good, which she experienced, or hoped for, to the free grace of God, through the merits of the Redeemer. To her husband and friends bewailing her expected death, she addressed the words of Christ, "Weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children." The salvation of souls and the prosperity of religion lay near her heart. She

urged it upon her family and others to make religion their chief pursuit. This she enforced by her words, but more powerfully by her example. Her peace and comfort of mind continued to the last.— Having finished her course she fell asleep in Jesus, and as we trust is gone to her Saviour, in whom she so much delighted.

In scripture, much is said respecting the pleasures of religion, and its consolations in times of trial. When we see such declarations exemplified, the power, the joys and the supports of religion felt and evidenced, we are led more fully to believe in the divine promises, and more feelingly to realize the excellency of religion.— When we see persons, languishing on a bed of sickness, under a lively sense of the near approach of death, of their own characters as guilty and ill-deserving, and of the perfect holiness and justice of God, experience inexpressible joy in contemplating the divine character, and through faith in Christ triumph over death and the grave; the righteous must feel their faith strengthened, and be enabled more fervently to praise and adore their glorious Redeemer who is thus mighty to save. Sinners also at such times are constrained to pay an involuntary tribute to religion, and to join with Balaam in saying, “Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his.”

PHILO.

THE BIBLE.

An affecting and remarkable Tale.

The circumstance itself occurred in the town of Warrington, and was related there at a Bible meeting, by a gentleman of respectability and veracity, connected with the society.

The circumstance was introduced in the following words:—About three weeks ago, two little boys, decently clothed, the eldest appearing about thirteen, and the younger eleven, called at the lodging house for vagrants, in this town for a night's lodging;—the keeper of the house, very properly, took them to the Vagrant's office to be examined; and if proper objects to be relieved. The account they gave of themselves was extremely affecting, and no doubt was entertained of its truth.—It appeared that but a few weeks had elapsed since these poor little wanderers had resided with their parents in London. The typhus fever however, in one day, carried off both father and mother, leaving them orphans, in a wide world without a home and without friends! Immediately after the last mournful tribute had been paid to their parents' memory, having an uncle in Liverpool, poor and destitute as they were, they resolved to go and throw themselves upon his protection. Tired, therefore and faint, they arrived in this town on their way. Two bundles con-

tained their little all. In the youngest boy's was found, neatly covered, and carefully preserved, a *Bible*. The keeper of the lodging house, addressing the little boy, said, 'you have neither money nor meat, will you sell me this bible? I will give you five shillings for it.' 'No,' exclaimed he, (the tears rolling down his youthful cheeks,) 'I'll starve first.' He then said, 'there are plenty of books to be bought besides this; why do you love this bible so much? He replied, 'no book has stood my friend so much as my bible.' 'Why, what has your bible done for you?' said he. He answered—'When I was a little boy about seven years of age, I became a Sunday Scholar, in London; through the kind attention of my master, I soon learned to read my bible—this bible, young as I was, showed me that I was a sinner, and a great one too; it also pointed me to a Savior; and I thank God that I have found mercy at the hands of Christ, and I am not ashamed to confess him before the world.'

To try him still farther, six shillings was then offered him for the bible. 'No,' said he, 'for it has been my support all the way from London;—hungry and weary, often have I sat down by the way side to read my bible, and have found refreshment from it.' Thus did he experience the consolation of the Psalmist, when he said, 'In the multitude of the sorrows that I had in my heart, thy comforts

had refreshed my soul.' He was then asked—'What will you do when you get to Liverpool, should your uncle refuse to take you in?' The reply may excite a blush in many established christians. 'My bible tells me,' said he, 'when my father and mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up.' The man could go no farther, tears choked his utterance, and they both wept together. They had in their pockets, tickets, as rewards for their good conduct, from the school to which they belonged, and thankfulness and humility were visible in all their deportment.

At night these two little orphans bending their knees by the side of their bed committed themselves to the care of their heavenly Father—to him whose ears are open to the prayers of the poor and destitute; and to him who has said, 'Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me.' The next morning, these refreshed little wanderers arose early, dressed themselves for their journey, and set out for the town of Liverpool; and may he who hears the ravens when they cry, hear and answer their petitions, guide them through time, and bless them in eternity.

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COLLEGE RECORD.

Union College—The commencement of Union College, at Schenectady was held on the 4th ultimo. The degree of A. B. was conferred on 79 young gen-

tleman, alumni of the institution, and that of A. M. on 17.

The degree of D. D. was conferred on the Rev. William Rafferty, Principal of St. John's College, Maryland, Rev. Lucius Bowles, Fellow of Brown University, R. I. Rev. Ernest Harzelius, Hartwick, N. Y.

The degree of LL. D. was conferred on Mr. John Griscom, Chemical Professor, N. Y.

The honorary degree of A. M. was conferred on the Rev. Lewis Leonard, of Albany, Rev. Samuel Luckey, of New-Haven, Conn. Rev. Mr. Prentiss, of Athens, N. Y. Rev. William A. Clark, of New-York.

Columbia College—The annual commencement of Columbia College was celebrated on the 3d ultimo, at Trinity Church. The degree of Bachelor of Arts was conferred on 23 young gentlemen.

The degree of Master of Arts was conferred on 6 gentlemen, Alumni of Columbia College.

The honorary degree of Master of Arts was conferred on the Rev. Levi S. Ives, Rev. William A. Clark, James Cooper, James K. Paulding, and Samuel Cowdry, Esq.

The degree of Doctor of Laws was conferred on Thomas Addis Emmet, of New-York city, Langdon Cheves, of Philadelphia, and Daniel Webster of Boston; and the degree of D. D. on the Rev. Mr. Harzelius, Principal of the Hartwick institution, Otsego county.

Transylvania University—The commencement at Transylvania University, in the state of Kentucky, took place on Wednesday the 14th of July. The degree of Bachelor of Arts was conferred on 24 young gentlemen; that of Bachelor of Laws on 10; that of Doctor of Medicine on forty-six. The whole number of degrees conferred at this University, from its establishment to this day, is 337. The degree of Doctor of Laws, also, was conferred at the late commencement, on J. J. Crittenden, of Kentucky, and Edward Livingston, of Louisiana.

At the late commencement of the University of Pennsylvania, 14 young gentlemen were admitted to the degree of A. B. and 34 to that of A. M. The degree of D. D. was conferred on the Rev. Henry A. Mullenburg.

The annual Commencement exercises at Harvard University took place on

Wednesday. The number who received the degree of A. B. was 65. The degree of A. M. was conferred on a large number of Alumni. The honorary degree of LL. D. was conferred on the Hon. Wm. Wirt, the Hon. Josiah Quincy, and the Hon. Daniel Webster.—The honorary degree of D. D. was conferred on the Rev. Bazaleel Howard of Springfield, Rev. John Andrews, of Newburyport, and Rev. Joseph Tuckerman, of Chelsea.

Dartmouth College Commencement.—The commencement at Hanover was attended on Wednesday the 25th August, by an unusual number of strangers and gentlemen of distinction. The degree of Bachelor of Arts was conferred on 28 young gentlemen, and that of Master of Arts on 13 alumni of the college, and four other gentlemen were admitted to the degree of Doctor of Medicine.

The degree of D. D. was conferred on the Rev. Theophilus Packard, and the Rev. David Kellogg, and that of Doctor of Laws on the Hon. Joseph Story.

ORDINATIONS.

At a special meeting of the Association of the Western district of the County of New Haven, held in the City of New Haven, Aug. 17th and 18th, Mr. BENJAMIN CHASE received ordination as an Evangelist. Sermon by the Rev. Dr. Spring, of New-York, on the divine institution of the Christian Ministry, the object, and the way in which that object may be secured, from Acts xxvi. 16, 17, 18.

At Newburyport, Rev. William Ford, as colleague pastor with Rev. John Giles, in the 2d Presbyterian church. Sermon by the Rev. Wm. Jenks, of Boston.

At Chester, Vt. as an Evangelist in the congregational connexion, Rev. Uzziah C. Burnap. Sermon from 1 Tim. 3. 1, by Rev. J. Bates, D. D. Prest. of Mid. College.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Theophilus and F. will probably appear in our next number. Communications from Carver shall receive due attention.